



State of Wisconsin
Governor Scott Walker

Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection
Ben Brancel, Secretary

DATE: March 8, 2016

TO: Board of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection

FROM: Ben Brancel, Secretary *Ben Brancel*
Daniel Smith, Administrator, Division of Agricultural Development *Daniel Smith*

SUBJECT: Wisconsin Farm Center Bureau Report

PRESENTED BY: Kathy Schmitt, Bureau Director, Wisconsin Farm Center

RECOMMENDATION: Informational purposes only. No Board action is required.

SUMMARY / BACKGROUND:

The Wisconsin Farm Center works with farmers to improve their wellbeing so they can Grow Wisconsin Agriculture. Staff work with farmers to provide objective information they can use to make informed decisions. Assistance is provided through the use of a toll-free helpline as well as individualized service at the farm table.

Core services include:

- Financial consultations and feasibility analysis
- Farm succession planning
- Mediation
- Rural Electric Power Quality
- Dairy Herd Diagnostic services
- Minority and beginning farmer services
- Specialty enterprise development
- Information and referral resources

This verbal report will provide highlights of the Wisconsin Farm Center's activities and current trends. The following outline contains the information that will be presented.

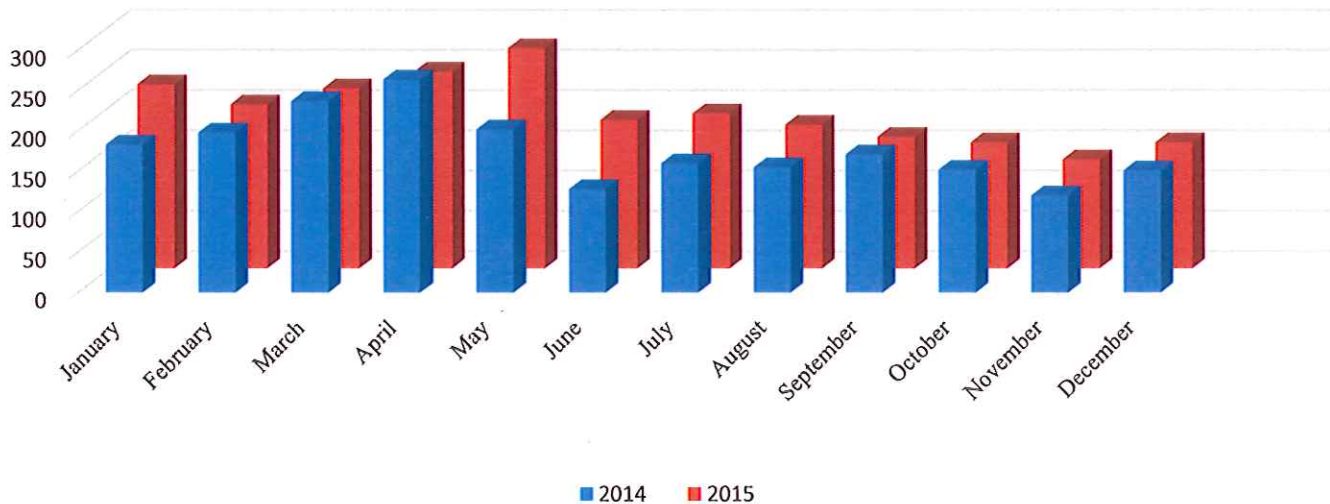
Agriculture generates \$88 billion for Wisconsin

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**Wisconsin Farm Center
Report to the Board of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection
March 11, 2015
Calendar Year 2015 Activities**

Wisconsin Farm Center Helpline Calls By Month



- Helpline calls for calendar year 2015 = 2,335
 - 10% higher than in 2014 (2,121 calls)
- Outreach
 - 62 events
- Cases (*contains duplicated cases)
 - Total unduplicated cases = 188
 - Farm Succession Planning = 93*
 - Financial Consultations = 116*
 - Dairy Herd Diagnostic Cases = 19

- Farm Mediation and Arbitration Program
 - 51 cases
 - Trends
 - Increase in FSA loan accelerations and denials
 - Late sign up for enrollment in the Ag Risk Coverage Program for FFY 2014-2015, a new crop insurance program that was part of the 2014 Farm Bill.
- Organics, Grazing, and Specialty Crops
- Outreach
- Cases
- Minority Farmer Program
- Doctor is In Series
 - Ginseng production
 - 3 mentors
- NAP Crop Insurance Workshop
- Mentor Training
- Cover crops, soil health, mentor roles
- Pesticide Applicator Training
 - Dane County
 - Wausau on March 11
- MOSES Conference – Hmong Language Track
 - 89 in 2016
 - 65 in 2015
- Helpline Trends
 - Financial distress
 - Anticipate pressure on spring input loans